

# USS TOPEKA CLG-8

## Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 10, No. 3

October, 1999



### Committee:

*John Reynolds, President; Jack Timmons, Secretary/Treasurer;  
Al Jefferis, Assistant Secretary; Dudley Cass, Reunion 00 Chairman;  
Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor; Ken Noble, Web Master*

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Boy oh Boy!!! you shoulda been there. The Branson Bash lived up to all expectations. Always something to do and plenty to eat and drink. Mary and I took in seven shows and took a tip across the famed Table Rock Lake in a Military Duck. As Yakuv Smirinoff would say "man! what a country".

My good friend Jack Connery bought me a bottle of my favorite Scotch, and I got kissed by two pretty girls. What else can you ask for. Man it just don't get any better than that. I feel sorry for anyone who misses any of these reunions. They just keep getting better every year.

So what are you doing next August? We will all meet again in beautiful San Diego and celebrate our tenth anniversary. Jack will bring me another bottle of my favorite Scotch (or, I may have to bring his favorite Irish whiskey - - we'll see). The pretty girls will be there. We will take a boat ride on the beautiful blue Pacific Ocean, we will do all manner of fun things, there will be all you can eat and drink; so get your "rear in gear" and start making plans. It's going to be another good one.

For more info on coming reunion events stay tuned to our website <[www.usstopekaclg8.org](http://www.usstopekaclg8.org)> and this newsletter. See ya in Diego

John Reynolds

### NEW MEMBERS (SINCE FEBRUARY)

John Mays, MMFN (59-61) Taylorsville, NC  
Gregory Landreneau, RM2 (67-68), LaMirada, CA  
Terry Jones, Golden, CO  
Richard Gordon, Darlington, MD  
Michael Whetsel, IC2 (66-69), Covington, TN  
Frank Fasone, LI3 (63-66), Maspeth, NY  
Billy McElhanon, BT2 (66-69), Plainville, MA  
Robert Battle, SN (68-69), Atlanta, GA

### TAPS

Bob Norrell, SH2 (67-68), San Diego, Cal., March 22, 1998.



Web Master Ken Noble shows off the Topeka website to Captain Jack Mansfield at the Branson reunion. Noble brought the website on a CD and Ken Fox (59-62) provided the computer.

### BINNACLE LIST

Calvin Ratcliffe, BT2 (60-63), recovering from cancer surgery at home. Franklin, MA.

James Bond, YN3 (64-67), recovering from a severe auto-pedestrian accident. He can be contacted at:

Room # 307-2  
The Institute For Rehabilitation And Research(TIRR)  
1333 Moursund  
Houston, Texas. 77030-3405  
phone 713-797-7312.

Don Cameron, LT 60-62, San Diego.

Carol Buse, LTJG 64-66, Reedsport, OR

### THE EDITOR APOLOGIZES

In the last issue, I included an article titled "To all Veterans," which discussed a law that Congress had passed, entitling veterans a benefit on their SGLI insurance.

It was a hoax.

I truly apologize for any inconvenience I may have caused. It was provided to me by a shipmate who had clipped it from a newspaper in his area. I did not check it out, which is one of the first things taught to aspiring journalists. For a moment, I had forgotten.

## MEET OUR NEW SECRETARY-TREASURER

Ensign Jack Timmons reported aboard Topeka in January 1964 and was assigned as Assistant CIC Officer. Formerly a Chief Radarman, Timmons was commissioned Ensign (LDO Operations) in 1963. Timmons was transferred to Flag Plot in December 1965 upon arrival in Subic Bay and was assigned as Electronic Warfare Officer for ComCruDesFlot 3. When Flot 3 scheduler LCDR Frank McGirr returned to the U.S. due to a family emergency, Jack became the flotilla scheduler.



In August 1967, he was transferred to FTC Mayport as Operations Training Officer. Other tours included duty with ComCruDesFlot 9 where he made another WestPac cruise, and a final shore duty tour in San Diego as OINC, Armed Forces Courier Station, San Diego. He retired in February, 1975

after 22 years of service.

After the Navy, Jack attended San Diego State University, graduating in June 1977 with a B.S. in Business Administration. He has worked for the County of San Diego; and, as a systems analyst for Pacific Bell, was involved in the implementation of many leading-edge technologies in the San Diego Center. He took early retirement from PacBell in 1992.

Timmons and his wife Jean, information systems manager for a small manufacturing firm, have been married for 32 years and have one son, Devin, who lives in Scotia, Cal. He maintains close relationships with his 3 sons from a previous marriage.

As a house-husband, Jack's interests in retirement include hiking, cooking, and reading, among others, and being Grandpa. He is involved in several local volunteer activities.

Timmons is looking forward to serving as secretary-treasurer of the Reunion Association, and realizes that he has big shoes to fill. He hopes that he can do the job in the same professional manner as has Dudley Cass.

## LETTERS

Dear Ed:

I am looking for someone that knew Pat Tempel GS2, on board 1960-1962.

I wish we could have gone to Branson. That was one thing Pat had wanted to do. Unfortunately he was diagnosed with lung cancer in March and passed away

August 14th. He was hoping to beat this and show up in the year 2000. I was looking forward to listening to you guys talk about those days.

Pat was very proud of his time in the service and loved talking about those days with anyone who would listen, but most of all with the guys who were in at the same time as he was. The question always came up "what ship were you on," and then they would talk about things like, "oh yeah, we joined up with the Topeka . . . ." and the story's would go on and on.

I do have a request. I would like to hear from someone who knew him. If you could help, would you please pass this around.

Shelly Tempel

Wife/Widow of H. Patton "Pat" Tempel GS2 1960-1962

Dear Ed:

What an outstanding week in Branson. Enjoyed seeing old and making new friends after all these years. I appreciate all of the hard work all of you good people did and am looking forward to San Diego. Thanks again for a great reunion.

John Courtney, Charlotte, NC

*Ed Note: Received a similar e-mail note from John's wife, Becky. We hope to see you guys in San Diego in 2000.*

Dear Ed:

What a great week. The hotel was the best that Sandy and I have been to with the reunion and, of course, seeing all the good people again is, as usual, the highlight of the trip.

It was all that we had come to expect and more. Radarmen still had the highest number of any division attending, so old shipmates were met and old tales were re-told with even greater embellishments. Friends made at other reunions were revisited and new ones made. As Dick Walker said, it is more like a family reunion than a shipmate reunion. I agree, and each year I find more cousins than I knew were out there.

Ken Noble, Louisville, CO

*Ed Note: And a chance for all to see the website first hand made it better. Thanks, Ken.*

Dear Ed:

Bet we missed a really good one - so sorry. My father did luck out stage I cancer and think they got it all out. Senior son also got married off in fine style.

Looking forward to San Diego next year. Best wishes to all.

Paul and Loretta Ruby, San Francisco

## **Summary Report of Board of Advisors Meeting, August 14, Branson Mo.**

Present: John Reynolds (President), Don Anderson, Dudley Cass, Jack Connery, Irad Parkhurst, Jim Ownby, Jerry Judge, Tom Eagling.

- John Reynolds presented proposed '99 Slate of Officers/Advisory Board, which was later voted on by the general membership.
- Extension of time-window for planning reunions. Proposal was made and approved to extend the window an additional year to (1) facilitate hotel negotiations, and (2) allow reunion planners to present their reunion plans to a full advisory board at the reunion 1 year prior to the planned reunion. Proposal accepted.

## **Summary Report of the Business Meeting, August 14, Branson, Mo.**

- Membership Report
  - 910 in Database (30 additions since last reunion)
  - 769 Active (on mailing list)
  - 65 Deceased (13 widows on mailing list)
  - 89 Not Active (bad address or chose not to be on mailing list)

Dues: 323 paid through '99  
(42 % of those on mailing list)  
53 paid beyond '99  
17 paid 5-year dues

At Reunion (as of 8/4/99):  
61 TOPEKA crewmembers at Reunion  
127 members and spouses/guests at Banquet

- Election of Officers:

Slate nominated: John Reynolds, Pres.; Jack Timmons, Sect./Treas.; Al Jefferis, Ass't. Sect./Treas. Floor opened for nominations. No additional nominations. Officer slate approved by voice vote.

Board of Advisors: Tracy Tipton offered resignation which was accepted. Advisory Board members Don Anderson, Jack Connery, Tom Eagling, Jerry Judge, Jack Kehoe, Don Nellis, Jim Ownby, Irad Parkhurst, Jerome Pennington re-elected by acclamation.

- Baki Hachi: Jack Connery requested inputs for the Baka Hachi Second Edition, which will be available at the next reunion.
- Selection of Reunion site for 2000. Long Beach and San Diego were proposed. San Diego selected by voice vote. Date of reunion to be in first 3 weeks of August, 2000. Member requested date selected be promulgated as soon as possible.
- Proposal of Reunion Sites for 2001. Atlanta, Philadelphia, Buffalo NY, and Yorktown VA were proposed. Philadelphia and Yorktown dropped due to lack of support of the members present. Atlanta proposed by Jerry Craig - Buffalo, NY proposed by Dick Walker.
- Proposal of Reunion Sites for 2002. As recommended by Advisory Board, time-window for reunion planning was extended for another year in order to: (1) get better hotel deals for the reunion, and (2) allow reunion planners to present plans to the full Advisory Board, at the reunion 1 year prior to the planned reunion.

Sites proposed for 2002: Tulsa/Oklahoma City - Jack Connery; Denver - Ken Noble; and Minneapolis Don Nelson.

## HERE'S WHO YOU MISSED IN BRANSON

Don Anderson, Woodbridge, VA  
Jesse Aragon, Anaheim, CA  
Don Archer, Wataga, IL  
John Attey, Ofallon, MO  
James Ayres, Necedah, WI  
James Bennett, Bella Vista, AR  
Jack Bock, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA  
Phillip Brooks, Cloverdale, CA  
Freddy Bruce, Burton, MI  
Parker Butcher, Shenandoah, IA  
Charles Campbell, Chula Vista, CA  
Dudley Cass, Bonita, CA  
Jack Connery, Tulsa, OK  
John Courtney, Charlotte, NC  
Jerry Craig, Cartersville, GA  
Edward Dzielsky, Eagan, MN  
Tom Eagling, Tucson, AZ  
Donald Everitt, Pittsburgh, PA  
Larry Fisher, Kinsley, KS  
Ken Fox, Terre Haute, IN  
James Garber, Rochester, MN  
Bill Gardiner, Lake Charles, LA  
Steven Hall, Toledo, OH  
Carl Hemenway, Centralia, WA  
Paul Hulette, Rogers, AR  
Terry Jones, Golden, CO  
Jerry Judge, Chula Vista, CA  
John Keith, Portland, OR  
Calvin Ladd, Minnetonka, MN  
Thomas Lee, Cassopolis, MI

Jack Mansfield, Silverdale, WA  
Robert McCullough, Renton, WA  
John Milbrodt, Canton, OH  
Donald Nelson, Minneapolis, MN  
Loy Nix, Flowery Branch, GA  
Ken Noble, Louisville, CO  
Joe Nolan, Cumming, GA  
Richard Null, Bonanza, AR  
Jim Ownby, El Cajon, CA  
"Parky" Parkhurst, Granada Hills, CA  
Dave Price, Covington, VA  
John Reynolds, Redondo Beach, CA  
Robert Robbins, Milton-Freewater, OR  
Isaac Roberts, Hixson, TN  
Harry Roth, Sallisaw, OK  
Robert Schramm, Orange, CA  
Andre Seaton, Tarzana, CA  
LeRoy Servin, Apache Junction, AZ  
Alonzo Simmerman, Lodi, CA  
David Small, Denton, TX  
Ronald Smart, Turlock, CA  
Russell Stamper, Apopka, FL  
Jimmy Starr, Topeka, KS  
Robert Strouss, Alma, AR  
Jack Timmons, San Diego, CA  
Tracy Tipton, Mason, OH  
Richard Walker, Mendon, MI  
Richard Wallace, Halifax, MA  
Mike Wallace, De Ridder, LA  
Douglas Weeks, Canastota, NY  
Egon Werdelman, San Diego, CA  
Michael Whetsel, Covington, TN  
James Whisenand, Elkhart, KS

Dear Ed:

I was a Seaman, assigned to the S2 Division and cooked aboard the Topeka 1967 to 1969. If anyone is interested, Gary Hershman, and Dom Porco, both aboard the same time, live in my area. Does anyone know where Bob Grant is?

Thomas Fitzsimmons, New York NY

Dear Ed:

Just a quick note to let you all know that we are so sorry that we were not able to attend the reunion this year. We made such wonderful friends last year in Boston when we found the reunion accidentally.

Cal had to have major surgery. The doctors found a malignant tumor at the junction of his esophagus and stomach. They removed one third of his stomach and two-thirds of his esophagus. The operation was nine hours long and really took a lot out of him. He is doing well, though, and after 10 days in the hospital, is home recuperating. If anyone has a chance to drop him a quick note, I'm sure he would love to hear about Branson. He has a six to eight week recovery so this will keep him busy.

Thanks so much to all those who have contacted Cal with their best wishes.

We hope to see you all next year.

Cal and Nancy Ratcliffe, Franklin, MA

## IT'S SAN DIEGO IN 2000, AUGUST 16-20

We are going to San Diego in 2000, to the Town and Country Hotel in Mission Valley, August 16-20. Our hosts will be Dudley and Ruth Cass.

Rates are \$89.00 a night and are good three days either side of the reunion dates. We will have a large 1600 sq.ft hospitality room. Here's what else we know so far:

- \$1.00 a day for parking which includes coming and going as much as you want each day.
- Four different places on site to eat.
- One block from Fashion Valley, a nice, large shopping center.
- One block from trolley and buses which will make it easy to get anywhere we want to go to.

More to follow in next newsletter.

## BRANSON ARTISTS HONORARY 'MATES



Bobby Vinton closes out his Branson show wearing his Topeka ball cap after being designated an Honorary Topekaman. Seventy Topeka sailors and family attended his show which was one of the best in Branson. Vinton, who had recognized the Topeka crowd during the performance, stated that he was "deeply honored to be one of us." Roy Clark was also so honored, but we did not get a picture.

## SHIP'S STORE REPORT

Christmas gift time is coming soon. Our Ship's Store items make great, unusual gifts for family and friends.

The following items are available. Please add \$5.00 for shipping. If you are on the internet, there is an order form on the Topeka web site.

The Topeka note pads are great for honeydo lists, telephone notes, and shopping lists. Be the only one in town to have them, or if you live in San Diego, one of a select few.

The license plate covers are a great way to let people know you were on Topeka and will help in finding "lost" shipmates.

It's football time and soon will be basketball in front of the tube. You'll need one of those insulated holders to keep the soft drink or beer cold.

- Adult shirts Navy, Red and Green, L,XL,2XL \$25.00
- Ball caps 10.00
- Key Chains 3.00
- Topeka Jackets, size L, XL, XXL 35.00
- Ship's Plaque (new design, w/name) 30.00
- Cold drink holders 5.00
- Topeka note pads (5 pack) 5.00
- License Plate Holders 4.00

**MOVING? MOVED?  
WAS YOUR NEWSLETTER FORWARDED?**

Then drop a card to Jack Timmons and let him know your new address.

### LAUGHLIN IN THE SPRING

Just for planning purposes, Dudley and Ruth report that it looks like the Laughlin bash will be the first week in March. Red Buttons will be there March 1-5 so they are thinking it will be during that time frame.

### BAKA HACHI REVISION

We are receiving many inputs to include in the Baka Hachi revision. **BUT NOT ENOUGH.** There are a lot of untold stories out there about life on Topeka. If you know one (and you all do), put it on paper and send it to Jack Connery. If you have pictures to go along with it, even better.

Don't worry about not being a good writer. Jack will edit it and rewrite as necessary. If it is a true story (and they all are), and you don't want to put your name on it, let Jack know.

In that regard, there's a Topeka information pamphlet published years ago that lists such things as number of pounds of potatoes cooked daily, gallons of water used daily, gallons of fuel per mile, etc. etc. Jack would like to have those figures.

**USS TOPEKA (CLG-8)  
Reunion Association Newsletter  
c/o Jack Connery**

**9814 E. 83<sup>rd</sup> Pl.  
Tulsa, Ok74133**



### NAMES/TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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**President**

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**Secretary-Treasurer**

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**USS Topeka Website**

<http://www.usstopekaclg8.org>







